776 The most important gods of the Badagas are Heththeswāmi, Mahālingaswāmi, Hiriya Udaya, Mādeswara, Mānkāli, Jadeswāmi, and Nīlgiri Rangaswāmi. And at 794 the present day, some Badagas proceed to the plains, to worship at the Saivite temple at Karamadai in Coimbatore, or at Nanjangūd in Mysore.

796 The festival in honour of Heththeswāmi is celebrated in the month of January at Baireganni. It is sometimes called ermathohabba, as, with it, ploughing operations cease. It always commences on a Monday, and usually (286) lasts eight days. A Sēdan or Dēvānga weaver comes with his portable hand-loom, and sufficient thread for weaving a dhubati (coarse cloth) and turban. At Baireganni there is a special house, in which these articles are woven. But, at other places where the festival is observed, the Badagas go to the weaver's village to fetch the required cloths. Early on the second morning of the festival, some of the more respected Badagas and the weaver proceed to the weaving house after bathing. (782) The weaver sets up his loom, and worships it by offering incense, and other things. The Badagas give him a new cloth, and a small sum of money, and ask him to weave a dhubati and two kachches (narrow strips of cloth). Daily, throughout the festival, the Badagas collect near the temple, and indulge in music and songs. Until the last day, they are not permitted to set eyes on the god Heththeswāmi. On the morning of the last day, the pūjāri, accompanied by all the Badagas, takes the newly woven cloths to a stream, in which they are washed. When they are dry, all proceed to the temple, where the idol is dressed up in them, and all, on this occasion only, are allowed to look at it. Devotees pay a small offering of money, which is placed on a tray near the idol. The crowd begins to disperse in

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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supply their Badaga partners when they find it is the bezoar, a hairy ball that accumulates in the paunch of some buffaloes. Eating a little of this is believed to make a baby strong, brave and manly; and so all Badagas—whether vegetarian or not, and even though quite cognizant of its polluting origin—feed some of it to their newborn sons.

Some Kotas are adept carpenters. In the days when Badagas were still using ploughs they obtained these from their Kota partners, who had made them from some wood supplied by the Toda partners of the Badagas. Kota men sometimes made the heavy wooden pounding-stick found in all Badaga households: in this case the wood was first obtained from the jungle slopes by the Kurumbas of one particular settlement, who passed it on to the Toda who had asked them for it. This Toda would then give the timber to the Toda partner of the Badaga needing the pounder. He in turn passed it on to the Badaga's Kota partner to whittle into a pounder. This is the most complex traditional network we know of in the Nilgiris.

Kota partners were also employed to help build houses or cattlesheds for their Badaga partners. In this case, too, if the Badaga's Toda partner were a relatively affluent man he would supply timber for the purpose. If the Kota were an affluent man he might give food to his own helpers who carried the timber from the Toda source. Similarly, the Badaga partner might get the timber that was needed for a Kota's house. There was in fact considerable flexibility in these intertribal connexions.

When a Badaga house is being built the Kota partner has to place a piece of iron in the foundations to drive away bad spirits; ghosts and demons abhor iron (as elsewhere across the Old World). A comparable ritual at the completion of a new Badaga cattleshed requires that the owner's Kota partner bring a crowbar and lay it across the threshold over which the first cow[7] to enter must step.

The Badagas very literally hold a house-warming ceremony in a newly built house, when the hearth is first built. The Kota partner of the owner must also attend this, bringing a new pot with him. This is essential, for grain has to be boiled in it during the ritual. Another Kota will also be less directly involved in this ceremony, as the mother's brother of the house owner also has to bring another pot for the same purpose from *his* Kota partner.

Until this century Kota men were usually requested to thatch Badaga houses. This service has, however, been discontinued: in

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unknown antiquity).[25] This is controlled by Irula priests—who, unlike most South Indian tribals, are Vaishnavites. The two monoliths inside the stone circles represent the god Ranga and his wife, to whom some of the local Badagas make a yearly offering of plantains, milk and coconuts:

> The hereditary pújári is an Irula, and on the day fixed by the Badagas for the annual feast, he arrives from his hamlet . . ., bathes in a pool below the summit, and marches to the top shouting 'Govinda! Govinda!' The cry is taken up . . . and the whole crowd, which includes Badagas, Irulas and Kurumbas, surrounds the enclosures while the Irula priest invokes the deities by blowing his conch and beating his drum, and pours oblations over, and decorates with flowers, the two stones which represent them. That night two stone basins on the summit are filled with ghee [clarified butter] and lighted, and the glare is visible for miles around. The ceremonies close with prayers for good rain and fruitfulness among the flocks and herds, a wild dance by the Irula, and the boiling . . . of much rice in milk. (Francis, 1908, 340; compare Ward, 1821, lxii; Breeks, 1873, 70; Macleane, 1893, 373).

While Badaga contact with the Irulas was less frequent than with other tribes, one of the major 'sanskritizing' influences in the Nilgiris was clearly constituted by the Irulas until the latter part of the last century. As Metz observed (1864, 133), 'They come up now and then . . . and divert the inhabitants with obscene theatrical performances representing passages in the life of Krishna, whom they call Govinda'. The Abbé Dubois (1906, 196) pointed out how in the early 1800s Rangasami Peak was a place of pilgrimage for Hindus from the plains, who 'have made it a *punyasthala*, or place of virtue . . . As it is very difficult to reach the top of this mountain, a view of the summit alone . . . is considered sufficient to remove the burden of sin . . . .' Those stalwart pilgrims who did clamber up the peak could hardly have failed to influence local Badagas to some extent in pre-British times.

For such services as their Krishna dramas and occasional medical therapy Irulas used to get grain from the Badagas, a gift which was probably in the nature of a *douceur*, for Irulas were also considered sorcerers (though less powerful than the true Kurumba). Some Badagas living close to Irulas probably had a more

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population, illegal hunting and poisoning of carnivors, and the great extension in the area of tea estates, predatory tigers and other large animals have become so rare on the plateau that there seems little need to propitiate Be:da Sa:mi.

Lingayats, over the past century at least, have taken up the worship of gods other than Shiva. The non-Lingayat Badagas have also adopted new gods, mostly Sanskritic deities related to Shiva, such as his sons Gaṇapati and Subramaṇia, and also Aiyappan. A parochialization of the great Hindu tradition is evinced in the temple established at Tu:raṭṭi for a stone brought there from Benares, or the silver image of Subramaṇia brought to a Ka:ṭe:ri temple from Benares, or the 'footprint of Ra:ma' on a rock at Mañjakombe.

BAJAN AND KRISHNA WORSHIP

These styles of worship are new to the Badagas, who are Shaivites (Krishna and Ra:ma are Vaishnavite deities) (Karl, 1945, 5). The performance of *bajan* (group hymns) began amongst them some thirty years ago, and so popular has it become that nearly every village has one or more sets of *bajan* instruments and holds a weekly performance of the sacred songs. These are hymns mostly in praise of the Lord Krishna; they are played on the instruments of Tamilnad, not of the Nilgiris, and the words are Tamil, not Badagu. Many villages have built a *bajan* house specifically for these devotional evenings; it is owned by the village in common and is considered a kind of temple. Inside are lithographic prints of Krishna and other gods and perhaps an image to which *pu:ja* is performed during the course of the devotions. Once a year donations are solicited from every household in the village for support of the *bajan* singing group. Not every villager is interested in this form of worship, but its popularity is clearly increasing, especially among the youths who regard it as a modern, urban form of worship. The rising interest in *bajan* has been noted elsewhere in South India (Singer, 1959, 148–149).

TAMILIAN AND KANARESE CELEBRATIONS

Heavy immigration to the hills, together with greatly improved communications with the plains to the north and east, especially

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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visit the child's home instead. The man bathes himself, puts on clean clothes, and then sits facing the child, the therapist being on the west side and the child to his east. If the child is restive some old lady holds it. That morning before sunrise, and before any water has been brought to the house, a woman, who must be in a pure state, brings a full pot of water there: it must be from a spring. On the way back with it the woman puts three, five, seven, nine or 11 dead-nettle flowers and three pieces of Bermuda grass into the water. The therapist now picks out the grass and stirs it around in the water while he says the spells. Then he splashes the water from the grass into the child's face, and the child is of course startled. This is done three times, and after the third splashing the child must immediately be moved away to some other spot. He is then made to drink a little of the water from the pot; and the flowers are taken out of it and placed on the child's head. The pot is then carried away and the water poured out in a place where no one will walk.

This is the usual treatment for children aged three to ten. As unweaned infants cannot easily drink the water another procedure is followed with them. The mother brings her baby to the therapist early in the morning. He unties one end of his turban while the rest of it stays on his head, and flicks this end into the child's face as he says the spells. As an alternative to using the turban a twig with three or four leaves on it can be waved in the baby's face as the therapist says the spells.

It is believed that evil spirits may enter a child's body while he is startled or frightened. A therapist can drive such a spirit out by startling the child again. It is probably for this reason that the procedures just described (5.40, 5.41) are followed through (they do not however work with adults). The therapist, usually a man, also says a spell

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bud and leaves in her mouth for a minute of two, and while keeping them there blows through her clenched fist into the patient's ear (as in 6.35), on the same side of the head as the afflicted eye; but she does not blow on the eye itself. This is done three times, and after each blow the therapist asks, "Is it gone?" In serious cases the white mark does not clear up in one day: then this treatment is given for three consecutive days, early in the morning before the patient takes any food or drink.

164 [753] [776] ACUTE CONJUNCTIVITIS (*kaṇṇu noi*)

6.37 Yet another eye disease is called "eye goddess," and since it is considered the work of a goddess Badagas behave as they do when the smallpox goddess comes. Unlike the above-mentioned eye diseases, this one is contagious. The eyes become red, they weep, ache, and swell up. When the patient awakens he cannot open his eyes because a white pus sticks the lids together. If he tears them open the eyes will itch and be more troublesome still. Many people, I am told, have blinded themselves by attempting to open the lids.

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The eyes should be washed very gently in the morning with the soft leaf of velvety patchouli or related species (*koḍaṅgu*) and some cold water: this will open them. A medicine is administered on three different days, chosen from the following: the third, fifth, seventh, ninth or eleventh days from the start of the illness. The therapist puts into some fresh water a number of white dead-nettle flowers, as many in fact as the number of days since the illness begin. He then splashes the water and flowers with his fingers onto the brow of the patient; splashing it as many times as the number of dayss ince the illness began. Following the third occasion on which he does this, he must add leaves of the nim tree to the remaining water. This water must be at body-temperature, and is used to wash the patient's entire body. Should the water be too hot the therapist must simply wait till it has cooled enough, and may not add cold water to it. After this bath the patient does

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fully with the partner. Some non-vegetarians do make a medicine for infertility from the eye of the crow-pheasant (*Centropus sinensis parroti*).

6.63. Badagas rarely offer *pu:ja* at a local temple nowadays in order to obtain children, but in the last century they often did so. Worship of the phallic *linga* symbol associated with Siva was considered very efficacious, particularly in those rare cases where it happened to be a prehistoric axe-head that had "miraculously appeared" in a field during ploughing. The Badaga ancestress deity Hette was also commonly resorted to for the same reason (Jagor 1876 : 199-200). Today it is usual for a couple with no children to make a pilgrimage to some important temple in the South Indian plains, where they make oaths to various gods, promising them goats, coconuts or idol ornaments once they have satisfied the supplicants' need for a child. It is no light matter for a man in an undivided joint family to take such an oath, because of the rules that it entails: in order to fulfil his promise after the birth of a child, the man must consult his family as to when that can be done. The problem is that (*a*) these oaths are normally fulfilled after a birth, but only on a festival day if they were taken in a *Badaga* temple: (*b*) they must not be fulfilled while *any* woman in the joint family is pregnant ; and yet (*c*) they must be fulfiled within twelve years of the requested birth. If this last rule is disregarded the offended god may visit another misfortune on the family; and so, even in a nuclear family, a man will try to discharge his obligation to the deity well before the twelve years following the birth, just in case his wife should happen to be pregnant again during the festivals of that final year. A further rule (*d*) is that if a man has promised the hair of his child to a deity, and if he waits for several years to make good his promise, then he must at the same time

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7 DANGEROUS AND EPIDEMIC DISEASES

"Measles does not harm one; the eye is ungrateful."
(Ironic saying)

164 753 776 7. 1. There are five diseases which the Badagas see as related, and which are called "sister" diseases because they are produced by visitations of the goddess Ma:riamma. These diseases are as follows:

chicken-pox (*cikkamma*, "small Mother")
smallpox (*doḍḍamma*, "great Mother")
measles (*kasare*)
(?) rubella (*tauḍamma*)
acute conjunctivitis (*Kaṇṇu no:*, cf. 6. 37)

These diseases are distinct from each other because the goddess responsible for all of them is thought to be "playing" in different ways.

164 In all five types it is possible for the therapist to distinguish which disease has occurred by certain of the symptoms. The first four diseases cause itching on various parts of the body; but if there are three spots on the palm of the hand, and/or the centre of the brow, and/or the hollow of the larynx, then the illness is smallpox or chicken-pox. The former is the most feared disease among Badagas, even more so than cholera or plague. It is characterized by the spots (*po:*) itching more and being about 1 cm apart, whereas with chicken-pox they are roughly 1/2 cm apart. In the cases of *kasare* and *tauḍamma*

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have been found a therapist takes cold water fresh from the spring, and adds to it three pieces of Bermuda grass and three dead-nettle flowers. This water along with its contents is sprinkled thrice over the child's head and nude body. The procedure is repeated on the fifth, seventh and ninth days after the spots were noticed, but using the same number of pieces of grass and of dead-nettle as there have been days since the apparent onset of the illness. By the ninth day the child usually feels better, but "in one case out of ten" this same procedure has to be followed for the final time on the eleventh day, using 11 flowers and 11 pieces of grass.

After the final treatment the child's body is washed for the first time since the infection was recognized. The bath-water needs to be at body temperature, but if it turns out to be too hot the parent must wait for it to cool and may not on this occasion add cold water to cool it. To this particular bath some turmeric and a nim leaf are added. When the water is ready it is poured over the child's head and body, but the parents do not rub him, wash him with soap, or even touch him. He is not dried with a towel, but made to sit in the house covered with a cloth while incense, turmeric and the dry outer skins of garlic and red onion are burnt together under the cloth. The child sits in this smoke for a minute or two, and only after doing so can he use woollen clothes again.

VARIOLA (*doḍḍamma*)

7.3. Probably no epidemic disease has been commoner or more feared among the Badagas than smallpox (Ouchterlony 1868: 65). In response to it they have developed a method of quarantine that certainly does much to restrict its spread.

The disease is caused by a visitation of the goddess Mariamma. To prevent her coming most Badaga villages celebrate an annual festival in her honour. At one well-known such festival at the temple site of Bokkapu:r chickens, goats and sheep

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753 776 796 782 were sacrificed by beheading directly in front of the Ma:riamma temple. Two features of this ceremony are of interest: one is that the soil was ploughed at that point so that the blood of the victims flowed into the earth; the other is that a curtain was drawn in front of the image of Ma:riamma while the beheadings took place, lest the sight of all the blood should so arouse her thirst that she would go on the rampage through some villages, seeking the death of her human victims. A few years ago the animal sacrifices ceased. The symbolism suggests that Ma:riamma is a type of Hindu earth mother concerned as much with the fertility of the soil as with the control of disease: its control is obviously linked to the conservation of agricultural labour, from an ecological viewpoint.

753 755 776 If a person gets smallpox it means that he has done something impure. For this reason a therapist must pray to Ma:riamma for forgiveness of the patient's sins. The goddess is thereby pleased, not offended, if the patient recovers; yet if she is very angry she may still cause further deaths.

751 177 (799) For a very long time the Badagas have relied on inoculations against smallpox. Probably the first person to administer these was the German missionary G.H. Weigle, who in 1846 vaccinated about 700 Badagas, "as a result of which a whole village gave him false names, for fear of magic" (Basel Mission 1846: 48-49; Eppler 1900: 79). This represented a remarkable change of attitude, for the situation up to that time was that, "...many refuse to take any remedies themselves, or to allow any to be administered to their relations, and thence arises their antipathy to vaccination. The supposition is not as to the nature or inefficiency of the means, but it is the fear of offending the goddess..."(Harkness 1832: 117, note). There is some evidence that the large-scale festivities in honour of Ma:riamma were adopted by the Badagas only towards the middle of the nineteenth century,

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a dating which raises the interesting question of whether this worship was intended to soften her anger at the effectiveness of the newly-introduced "European" vaccinations (Stokes 1882: 173).

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It is believed that one infected person can infect many others, and yet Badagas feel that if someone from *beyond* the hamlet has seen an infected person before a neighbour in his *own* hamlet does so, the latter person is that much safer from attack. It is as though some of the danger has been carried off. A person may be infected by smallpox at any age, and he then retires to bed, while the remainder of the population leave the hamlet altogether. Someone of the same sex as the patient, and who has already had the disease, stays to attend him. This person need not be a therapist, but is advised by a therapist. It is believed that anyone who has already had smallpox cannot transmit the disease from an infected person to someone else unless he does it by giving the patient's clothing to somebody. This is quite unlikely to happen since other villagers are not in contact with him at the time. When a patient dies, all the people looking after other smallpox patients in that hamlet help bury the corpse. While it is permissible for other men to dig the graves, they keep well away when infected corpses are brought for burial. It is believed (and perhaps justifiably) that if they were cremated, the smoke could spread the disease.

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Smallpox gives the patient more trouble with itching than do any of the other "sister" diseases, and so he lies on big plantain leaves since these give a cool sensation. He is given a diet of nothing but "cooling" foods, with very little salt. All of the rules and prohibitions adopted during the treatment of chicken-pox also apply to the people caring for patients with smallpox: thus the house must be kept pure, men must not smoke there, sexual relations must not occur, and no oily substances may be used in cooking. Anyone, whether

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have done an excess of good deeds over bad it is destined for heaven, whereas if there is an excess of bad deeds over good it is consigned to hell. "If you live a good life you can wait and see the human world; when you die you can wait and see the heavenly world." Badagas do not believe in the further reincarnation of souls, for each soul suffers seven births, but only the seventh incarnation is in human form, the previous ones having been as animals. God assigns a soul to each person at birth, and writes on his brow the exact number of years he or she will live. Even God can sometimes be wrong, however, because an attack by a wild animal, a suicide, murder or some other calamity, may deprive the body of life before it was destined to die. In this dilemma the soul is obliged to remain on the face of the earth for the balance of time until the day when God had intended it to depart this life. In the words of another proverb: "While living he has no blessing of God; when dead he is not in heaven." In this way ghosts are to be found on the Nilgiri Hills, hovering just above the ground with their feet pointing backwards and making a frightening sound—sometimes a screech and sometimes a groan.

Ghosts in general continue to have ordinary human needs, which they seek to satisfy. One ghost told listeners during a seance that it had lived for a while in hollow trees, but it found this very uncomfortable. Mostly ghosts want to be inside people so that they will be safe, warm and well fed. When a ghost has been exorcised from somebody, it may therefore possess another person or else live inside an animal if it is not properly trapped. Further expression of the ghost's humanity comes in the seance, when it may ask for unusual foods, liquor, cigarettes or good clothing, as a pre-condition for its leaving the possessed person. Particularly the ghosts of young people, suicides because of their anxieties and frustrations, may ask for the things they could not enjoy while alive, and will demand extra singing and dancing during the seance too.

Some Badagas are possessed by non-Badaga ghosts, in which case a ghost may speak through the victim's mouth in Toda, Malayalam, English or some other language not in fact known to the possessed person! Interpreters are sometimes brought in to help with such an exorcism.

Despite their widespread belief in ghosts, Badagas are initially skeptical of a person's claim to be possessed. They will therefore begin a seance by a questioning period to see if the ghost is "genui-

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or ear-rings, then her husband will die. If anyone dreams of a male buffalo, there will soon be a death in the village, probably among the dreamer's relatives (since Ya:ma, the Hindu god of death, comes riding on a buffalo). If one dreams of a woman approaching in a red *sa:ri*, this means a contagious disease will soon affect his house, his relatives or his village, usually through the disease-bearing goddess. Sometimes a person dreams of a woman in a red *sa:ri* leaving the village where there is an epidemic: this means the infection will now end.

Causation of Disease

10.17. The Badagas neither recognize any particular god as responsible for creating or curing all diseases, nor consider any one single health factor to cause all illness. As we have already seen, only a few of the diseases that Badagas cure are known by them to have a specific cause. Nevertheless we will briefly review here the variety of causes that therapists can cite.

(*a*) There are five diseases that are visited upon people by a goddess : these we have treated in detail above (7.1-7.6). A similar kind of causation was recognized for "Big Wind," where a bad spirit or deity was believed to have flicked a corner of its invisible clothing against the patient's body. Infertility in a woman is ultimately the will of God, although its immediate cause may in some instances be the failure of the couple to love each other sufficiently. Aside from these instances, however, the Badagas do not consider other chronic illnesses or bodily deformities to be inflicted by the gods : they are rather viewed as the effect of unknown sins committed by the victims themselves in previous incarnations. The will of a god and the effect of one's own or one's ancestors' sins cannot altogether be separated, however. If a person gets smallpox, for example, it means that he has done something impure; and in curing him the therapist must pray to Ma:riamma, the smallpox goddess, to forgive the patient's sins. In this way the curing process pleases the goddess and she may therefore oblige by doing what is required of her.

(*b*) Mental illness is caused by a bad spirit or bad ghost getting into the body. It is believed, on the other hand, that a person can become strong and healthy if a good ghost enters him, for it will help his body to grow.

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CHAPTER V

FACTION AND FAITH

121 Prior to the year 1913 only two factional divisions appeared in Badaga history. Each of these was the result of a conflict over religious issues; and each started as a conflict in a single hamlet and grew to Nilgiri-wide proportions. As some of the more recent factional disputes, to be discussed later in this thesis, are also concerned with articles of faith, it will be necessary first of all to introduce the reader to the religious systems of the Badagas. Once these are understood, at least in outline, our discussion of factionalism will become clearer.

Śaivites, Lingayats and Christians

785 Among the Badagas four distinct religious systems are to be found. The great majority of the people (perhaps 90%) fall within the general category of South Indian Śaivites. Three minorities, each numbering several thousand adherents, are
121 the Lingayats, the Protestants and the Roman Catholics. In the present study there will be no need to go into questions of the history, doctrine or ritual of any of these creeds. A short note on the manifest characteristics of each system will suffice.

•776 779 The Badaga Śaivites, including the Lingayats, acknowledge the existence of seven kinds of supernatural being, each of whom receives some kind of ritualized respect.

First and most important is the Hindu god Śiva, who is regarded, by

776 Badagas and all other Śaivites, as the supreme god. As is common in village
779 Hinduism, he is worshipped in a variety of forms, each of which may appear outwardly to be a distinct deity. The most widely encountered of these in the Nilgiris are the bull, Nandi, and the members of Śiva's family, his wife Pārvati and his sons Ganeśa and Subramaniam. Badagas also worship the disease-bringing goddesses,
776 Mari and her three sisters, all of whom are aspects of Pārvati. There are a few
778 (mostly recent) temples to Viśnu, who is called Ranganātha, and who, together with
779 Brahmā, is considered to be an inferior aspect of Śiva. Śiva is commonly represented in the temples of all Badagas, and not only among the Lingayats, by a stone in the lingam shape. This is supposed to symbolize the form of the universe. Each hamlet usually has a temple dedicated to at least one of these gods.

(773) The second category of deities is that of the distinctively Badaga gods, who seem originally -- to judge from the stories told about them -- to have been the ancestors of the Badagas themselves. There are two important ones: Hiriodeya, an old man, and Hetthe, an old woman usually thought of as his wife (Harkness 1832: 110; Francis 1908: 316). Many hamlets have temples for one or both of them, and seem to regard them in each place as ancestors of the particular hamlet rather than of all Badagas. Unlike the other gods, they are depicted on temples in the distinctive Badaga dress.

776 The third category covers the gods of nature. These include such phenom-
779 ena as sun, moon, wind, water and earth. They are not objects of protracted
782 worship. There are no temples to the gods of nature; only certain patterns of respect. Thus, when a man gets up in the morning he salutes the sun as he says a brief prayer relating to his own well-being. When a man has to cross a stream with a horse, he should not insult the water by riding straight through it but should

776 dismount. He should not urinate in a stream, either; nor should he stand up while
779 urinating on the earth, for this shows disrespect to the earth goddess. He should
782 always squat down to urinate or defecate, and for fear of disrespect the buttocks
(514) should not be directed toward the sun at this time. But apart from such minor regulations for personal conduct the gods of nature receive little attention, except when the water-goddess has not brought rain in time. Then the villagers will say prayers and make offerings at one of their temples in an attempt to get the favor of a rainfall.

775 The fourth category of supernatural beings is the ghost. This is the wan-
779 dering spirit of a person who chanced to die before he was destined to, and it frequently gets inside a living person to find warmth and food. The malicious
(789) ghosts can cause a lot of trouble, but there is no use in worshipping them. When a ghost becomes bothersome it is exorcised by a man noted for this art, who gives it whatever material requirements it may (through the mouth of the possessed person) demand. Ghosts cannot usually act as intermediaries between man and gods; but there is a special category who become angels. These are dead people who have done good during their lives, but who for some reason want to return to this
(828) world rather than be merged with god. While they are waiting to be reborn to a
(787) higher social status they act as the messengers of god, and come to people in their dreams to warn them of impending disasters.

776 The fifth category of supernatural beings is the demon, who is periodically
779 propitiated with a blood sacrifice or some liquor. This is a being who is incapable
782 of doing good, but may do harm if he chooses. He is thought capable of killing people that he meets at night, and of obstructing various projects. There are no temples to the demon, but there are recognized places in the fields where offerings are left for him, just as there are recognized places for leaving things that

a ghost asks for.

The sixth category of supernatural beings, a group to whom private prayers are often directed in the home, are the great national heroes. These are primarily Mr. Nehru, the late Prime Minister, Subhas Chandra Bose, the Bengali patriot, and above all Mahatma Gandhi. People disagree about the nature of their great power over men; but many Badagas certainly regard them as enlightened saints. Nehru seems to symbolize political power, Bose military power, and Gandhi spiritual power.

Hindu saints are really the seventh category of supernatural beings. Saints, prophets and spiritual leaders, like the national heroes, are worshipped in the home. A small room at one end of the veranda contains framed lithographic prints of such beings, and here the men of the household -- and sometimes the women -- will address their prayers to the depicted pantheon. The collection of framed household deities regularly includes such beings as Śiva and his family, saints like Sai Baba, Swami Vivekananda, Buddha and Jesus Christ (Ranga 1934: 63), political leaders like Nehru, Gandhi, S.C. Bose and K. Kamaraj (then President of the Congress Party), and a portrait of the most recently deceased head of the family. Jesus and Mary are widely respected powers: Badagas who live near to a church sometimes make contributions to the Christians' poor fund at Christmas, and it is not uncommon to see Śaivites present at the Christmas-Eve service in the Protestant church, and at the Easter procession of the Catholic church. One Lingayat man has pictures only of Jesus and the Madonna in his house, and does a daily meditation before them.

Every hamlet feels that to have any prestige in the eyes of others it must at least boast a temple structure for its god or gods. Even so, there are many deities that are embodied only in a rough stone object standing under a tree or

779 Because of the isolation of the Lingayat Badagas, they have only recently
•776 begun to learn about the details of Vīraśaiva philosophy. They wear the lingam
[778] and bury their dead; but they worship various deities other than Śiva, just as
[764] other Badagas do, and have numerous temples with Lingayat priests but -- until two decades ago -- no monastery at all. Indeed, all seven categories of supernatural beings which we described earlier as influencing the lives of Śaivite Badagas
184 are equally respected in the Lingayat hamlets. It would probably be correct to say
779 that until the end of the last century the various Lingayat albe differed culturally from all other Badagas only in their worship of a personal lingam and their custom of burying the dead.

795 Little need be said here about the Badaga Christians, as we must soon
[162] review their emergence as a faction. Their numbers (perhaps 2000) are divided fairly evenly between the unified Protestant Church of South India and the Roman Catholic Church. Relations between the members and clergy of these two churches are now very cordial, although this has not always been so. At the time we are presently concerned with, around 1913, there were no Roman Catholic Badagas: all of the Christians were Lutherans (Eppler 1900: passim).

621 The Badaga Christians live in the four Nilgiri towns and in several
795 Christian hamlets. These hamlets are exogamous, except in the case where a family has migrated from one hamlet to another and may then arrange marriages with Christians in its new place of residence. In recent cases of marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant, the bride will join whichever is her husband's church.

794 Discipline in a Protestant hamlet rests in the hands of the Pastorate Com-
621 mittee, which is composed mainly of laymen. This is in contrast with the more
[793]

177 As the wealth of such families increases, and as the possibility of their upward
556 mobility, as modern Indian families rather than as Badaga villagers, becomes a
829 reality, their attitudes toward Nilgiri society and its marriage regulations change. No longer are the requirements of the traditional culture so demanding or so relevant; for these people are now oriented towards a larger South Indian society, a society whose aims and ideals are stated -- albeit in exaggerated form -- in the morality and cultural equipment of modern romantic Indian films.

Religious Change since 1913

178 Four kinds of religious change have affected various sections of the Badaga community during the present century. These changes are not directly related to each other, and need to be considered separately:

1) Bhajan and Kriśna worship have become popular;

2) The Lingayats have developed their previously tenuous ties with Lingayats in Mysore State;

3) A few distinctively Tamilian and Kanarese festivals and rituals have been adopted;

4) A Roman Catholic community has appeared among the Badaga Christians.

These developments will each be discussed in turn.

796 1) Bhajan and Kriśna worship are new to the Badagas: Kriśna is
(796) a Vaiśnavite deity, the Badagas are Śaivites. The performance of bhajan (group
(795) hymns) began among Badagas some 20 or 25 years ago; so popular has it now become, nevertheless, that nearly every hamlet has one or more sets of bhajan instruments, and there is a regular -- often a weekly -- performance of the sacred
533 songs. Bhajan songs are devotional hymns, generally in praise of the lord Kriśna;
177 they are played on the instruments of Tamilnād, not of the Nilgiris, and the words

433 (648) employing Kasuvas and exploiting the grazing potentials offered by tropical savanna woodlands, bamboo thickets, thorny thickets, and related savannas of the Mysore Ditch.

234 778 (776) (782) (346) The Bergani dairy-temple center. A sacred buffalo herd is maintained at the Bergani dairy-temple center honoring the goddess Hasthi Hethai. At the center there is a building with an inner dairy-temple, priest's quarters, and rooms to shelter buffalo calves (Plate III, A). Several buffalo-pens stand close by. Down slope there is another building where pilgrims may sleep. Inside it is a sacred

778 (782) (793) (788) room where an employed Chetti annually weaves new clothing for the goddess's image and the attendant priest. Food for hundreds of pilgrims who attend an annual festival is cooked in a nearby shed with aligned fireplaces.

234 778 (431) (648) Features inside the dairy-temple are identically related to the arrangement of features within Badaga row temples described in a later chapter. The dairy-temple center and a herd of over 70 buffaloes are supported through monetary gifts and buffaloes donated by devotees. Todas sometimes give buffaloes. Most gift buffaloes are garlanded and presented to the priest during a week preceding the festival honoring the goddess. The young priest, who may serve for a year or more, looks

234 778 793 after the sacred buffaloes and processes their milk inside the dairy-temple. He never returns to secular life during his term in office, and must give up the priesthood on Hasthi Hethai's Monday if he starts dreaming about girls or wishes to get married. The youth milks sacred buffaloes in the morning and evening, takes buffaloes to and from

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50

539 which may be freely translated thus:—'This is the death of Śevani (a Baḍaga female). In memory of her, Jannige the she-calf of the buffalo Bannige is given in donation to atone for her sins. She goes now in a car from this mortal world to the great world (heaven). All the one hundred sins committed by the ancestors of this person, committed by the ancestors of the ancestors of this person, all the sins committed by this person herself, *viz.*, not giving of cooked rice as food to the son in distress, the not giving of fire to the neighbour, the sin of having pointed out the wilderness, and so led into difficulty the son who wanted to know the way, the sin of having ruined brothers and sisters, the sin of having taken away others' property and houses, the pouring of water on a blazing fire—may all these one hundred sins be washed away by this person coming in contact with the gold pillar[1] and by her rubbing herself against the silver pillar.[1] May the door of the house of Karma (Fate) be shut up against this person. May the door of the house of Dharma (Meritoriousness) be open to this person. May the devils and other evil beings cease their mischief to this person. May the Milapâla thread become tight to enable the soul of this one to walk over it and reach the heavens. May the door of the world of happiness (Sagga-Svarga) be open to this person. May this person become resplendent with beauty, by taking hold of the feet of that Brahma,[2] and by taking hold of the feet of this Basava[2]. May this one reach the holy presence of Śiva.' All say 'May it be so.—Amen'.

764 Let us suppose that the burial ground is reached, and that the Baḍaga in the case before us belongs to a caste that is accustomed to bury its dead. The eldest of the agnatic kindred fixes a crowbar on the south side of the corpse. All the other Baḍagas now join him in digging a big oblong pit to contain the dead body. The body is then taken round this pit and is placed in it with its face turned towards the north. Four twigs of the Apâmârga (Tamil Nâyuruvi—*Achyranthes aspera*) are planted at the four corners of this oblong pit. A lighted lamp made of cowdung and filled with oil is placed beside the head of the corpse and threads are passed diagonally

[824] [237] [512]

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[775] [1] Gold and silver pillars are supposed to exist in the other world and the soul of the dead by coming in contact with these is believed to wash away all its sins.

[776] [2] Gods in whom the Baḍagas believe in this world. Basava is regularly worshipped. Śiva is the highest god in their mythology and through the worship of Brahma and Basava they reach him in the end.